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January 6, 2016

To: Each Supervisor

FROM: Cynthia A. Harding, M.P.H.  
Interim Director

SUBJECT: **ADVANCE NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO NEGOTIATE A SOLE  
SOURCE CONTRACT WITH THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF  
CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES**

This is to notify you that the Department of Public Health (DPH) intends to begin sole source contract negotiations with The Regents of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) to provide expert public health project management and evaluation services for a pilot project targeting the testing and treatment of tuberculosis (TB) infection among immigrants at high risk for TB infection and development of TB disease.

This notice is being sent in accordance with revised Board Policy 5.100, which states that County departments that intend to negotiate a sole source service contract for Board approval must provide advance written notice to your Board at least four (4) weeks prior to commencing contract negotiations for new contracts.

### **Background**

As a recipient of a Cooperative Agreement from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), DPH is required to implement and report on TB prevention interventions within high risk populations, including immigrant and refugee populations. On January 9, 2015, DPH's TB Control Program (TBCP) submitted a funding proposal to the Los Angeles County (LAC) Quality and Productivity Commission (Commission) Productivity Investment Fund (PIF) to support the implementation of an enhanced TB prevention project. The proposed project would be implemented as a partnership between DPH's TBCP and Community Health Services, the Department of Health Services (DHS), and UCLA. Specifically, the PIF grant would be used to plan, implement, and evaluate a pilot intervention within Civil Surgeon practices serving immigrant populations at high risk for TB infection and progression to TB disease.

A Civil Surgeon is a medical doctor or doctor of osteopathy licensed in the State of California and designated by United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to provide medical examinations to permanent residency applicants including screening and testing for TB.

Currently in LAC, there are no program services that focus on the treatment of TB infection among permanent residency applicants, a high risk group with increased rates of TB disease. The intervention will address this important gap in existing services by providing high quality TB prevention services to persons applying for permanent residency. The intervention will prevent future cases of TB disease in this population by achieving the following goals: 1) increase screening and testing for *M. tuberculosis* infection; 2) increase initiation of treatment for TB infection; and 3) increase completion rates for the treatment of TB infection, preventing the development of future cases of TB disease which have the potential to further transmit TB within the community.

UCLA, through its Fielding School of Public Health, Department of Epidemiology, will provide expert public health project management and evaluation services to survey and recruit Civil Surgeons for the pilot intervention. Specifically, UCLA will collaborate with the Curry International TB Center (CITC) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to deliver TB education workshops to Civil Surgeons. In addition, UCLA will implement and evaluate a project of targeted testing and treatment of TB infection within four (4) to six (6) Civil Surgeon clinic facilities. The final project report will outline recommendations for a County-wide implementation of the intervention among Civil Surgeons in LAC, including treatment referral processes for DPH and DHS clinics, as well as with private sector providers.

### **Justification for Sole Source Agreement**

On March 11, 2015, the Commission, fully understanding that the project would be implemented through a partnership with UCLA, unanimously approved DPH's PIF grant proposal. The PIF grant proposal included letters of support from each organization collaborating on this project, including a letter from the Director of DHS, citing this project as having the potential to reduce disease burden and health care costs, and a letter from the Chair of the Department of Epidemiology, UCLA Fielding School of Public Health, noting the benefits created through this partnership for continuing efforts to work with diverse ethnic communities afflicted with serious but preventable disease.

The UCLA Fielding School of Public Health, Department of Epidemiology has existing programmatic, technical, and scientific expertise related to TB prevention within the Civil Surgeon community. The Department of Epidemiology is currently conducting public health outreach to Civil Surgeons in LAC with a focus on TB prevention, under the direction of Dr. Sanghyuk Shin, Ph.D., an Adjunct Assistant Professor and an infectious diseases epidemiologist specializing in TB epidemiology. UCLA also has an established partnership with CITC and CDPH to develop a Civil Surgeon training program.

UCLA has gained national recognition for its work with the Civil Surgeon community. At the CDC's 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Tuberculosis Epidemiologic Studies Consortium (TBESC) meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, held on September 18, 2015, UCLA's method of TB prevention outreach among LAC Civil Surgeons was highlighted as a possible model for nationwide replication. UCLA is uniquely positioned to successfully implement this project, fulfilling all the prerequisites for delivering project services as described in the Scope of Work.

Finally, contracts with UCLA, as a public-sector government entity, do not come under the Los Angeles County Code's bidding requirements for contracts with private businesses.

### **Impact to DPH if Sole Source Contract is Not Approved**

If the sole source contract is not approved, there will be significant delays in implementation of the project, jeopardizing grant funding because project timelines for initiation and completion may not be met. DPH will also be unable to leverage UCLA's existing expertise working with the Civil Surgeon community, potentially lowering the quality of services delivered to the community of permanent residency applicants. Finally, as this project addresses an important gap in existing services, there will be further delays in the provision of critical TB prevention services among immigrants at high risk for TB infection and development of TB disease if this sole source contract is not approved.

### **Alternative Plan**

DPH could conduct a Work Order Solicitation for evaluation services which may result in identifying a vendor with general expertise implementing and evaluating public health interventions. It is unlikely that a Work Order Solicitation would identify a vendor with the prerequisite working knowledge of the Civil Surgeon community and the established relationships with the CDC, CDPH, and CITC that are critical to the project.

DPH could also re-open the Request for Statements of Qualification for evaluation services to qualify additional vendors to provide services, but the resulting delay may jeopardize project funding and the availability of UCLA to participate.

### **Timeline**

DPH intends to commence negotiations on a new sole source contract with UCLA four weeks from the date of this memorandum. The Board letter requesting approval to execute the contract is projected for a Board meeting in March, 2016, for services effective date of Board approval through June 30, 2018.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please let me know.

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c: Chief Executive Officer  
County Counsel  
Acting Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors